

MISSOURI. Conservationist

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Gross National Happiness...in Nature?

A few years ago, I read about a new idea from the leader of another country. That king decided that his people's quality of life wasn't just about economic productivity. So he came up with a new way

to view their richness—instead of gross national product he devised a gross national happiness index.

Given today's challenges, this seems a perfect time to expand our view of what defines us. It's a great time to look at what creates real wealth of heart and mind.

Family and friends of course enrich us. But nature, wildlife, the outdoors—whatever you like to call it—is another part of the formula for quality of life. And the very best thing is that it's available for all Missouri citizens to enjoy.

In the past few years, a surge of interest has exploded about ensuring our children have opportunities to connect with nature.

In our state, the Conservation Department has been working to give Missouri's kids, both urban and rural, a way to enhance their well being through the Discover Nature Schools program. This program provides teacher training and engaging instructional units (specific lesson plans and activities) that meet the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Grade Level Expectations and testing standards. We also have provided grants for related field trips and teaching materials.

The program includes a 6–8th grade unit on the wonders of water—of life in streams, ponds and river; there's also “Nature Unleashed,” a 3–5th grade unit on habitats. We're work-

ing on a unit for grades K–2 and a high school ecology unit for biology and agriculture.

Conservation education has been part of our agency's mission from its beginning, so we're in a perfect position to help our children enjoy forest, fish, and wildlife while also developing an understanding of what it takes to keep it healthy and sustainable.

I'm sure you're aware of the lack of outdoor play in young children; about the national decline in number of hunters and anglers; the increase in obesity and attention deficit disorder; and on and on. If you're involved in education, you also know that resources are tight and time is limited.

What can you do? Please help your local schools sign up with the Conservation Department for the Discover Nature Schools program. It gives children an opportunity to explore the outdoors and to learn outside in nature. You can find out more at: www.MissouriConservation.org/15642.

Though it's very lyrical, that bit of Wordsworth poem does capture the sense of wonder you likely found in nature as a child. If you're lucky, you still have it now and then. Please help instill it in kids today. Help them Discover Nature...and happiness.

Lorna Domke, outreach and education division chief



*There was a time when meadow, grove, and stream,
The earth, and every common sight,
To me did seem*

*Apparelled in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.*

—William Wordsworth From *Ode...from Recollections of Early Childhood*

OUR MISSION: *To protect and manage the fish, forest and wildlife resources of the state; to serve the public and facilitate their participation in resource management activities; and to provide opportunity for all citizens to use, enjoy and learn about fish, forest and wildlife resources.*



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Cover: Brown trout by David Stonner

📷 16–35mm f/2.8 lens
f/2.8 • 1/1000 sec • ISO 400

Left: Trout angler on the North Fork
of the White River by David Stonner

📷 70–200mm f/2.8 lens
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This section reports on goals established in *The Next Generation of Conservation*. To read more about this plan, visit www.MissouriConservation.org/12843.

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A REAL GEM

I just finished the January issue and the

photos and *Three Gems* article by David Stonner were wonderful. I believe Mr. Stonner represents the true heart of everything the MDC has and is trying to achieve for Missourians. In addition to his duties for the *Conservationist*, he was kind enough to furnish a wealth of data and information for a research paper my daughter wrote on the limnology of Lake of the Ozarks, after many other sources failed. This is a man who loves his work and it is a great asset to the MDC and a credit to our state.

George F. Koob, Ellisville

I lived in St. François County for 32 years, and enjoyed the state parks located in Iron, Madison,

and Reynolds counties. Taum Sauk Mountain and Johnson Shut-Ins are my favorites. I moved to Jefferson County three years ago and have been extremely homesick. I enjoyed the article and can now add Pickle Springs and Hickory Canyons to my list of parks to visit. The pictures included in the article are magnificent. I want to commend the Department for a wonderful publication. Thank you for continuing to support and care for our wildlife and natural beauty.

Lorie Kurtz, Hillsboro

We just got back from visiting the Lon Sanders Canyon in Piedmont. It was beautiful and worth the trip! On several occasions, we've visited Amidon CA to visit the Castor River Shut-Ins. That location is another gem in our great conservation system.

We've been to Pickle Springs several times, though it has been a while. We haven't visited Hickory Canyon yet, but I'm sure we'll get

around to it. Even around the metropolitan area of St. Louis, we enjoy the various conservation areas. We enjoy taking photos of the beauty that surrounds us.

Our state is truly top of the line for those of us that enjoy the natural beauty our state has to offer under the Department's stewardship. I just wanted to say thank you to all the dedicated, hard working, caring people that make up the Missouri Conservation Department.

Sharon Spear, Arnold

BUNNIES AND BEAGLES

When I read *Bunny on the Run* on Page 26 of the January issue I was surprised, as just a few days before I took my 3-year-old grandson, Wyatt, on a walk in the city park. It was after we had all of the snow, and he really enjoyed looking for rabbit tracks. He was tickled when we found one place where the rabbits were "going to the bathroom." I really enjoy reading your magazine.

Margaret Bradshaw, Harrisonville, MO

I loved the photo of the beagles in the field. The article was very good, also. However, I need to correct you about beagles being "plodders." There are some folks who enjoy the slower beagles, but many of us enjoy the beagles who run the rabbits at a fast pace and really push the cottontails back to "point A." I have owned and run beagles since 1959, and though I don't shoot guns, I love the beagles' voices, love the fast chase, and enjoy sitting on a knoll where I can watch the bunny fly past me, and back into the thickets whence she came.

Jaye Wright, Wright-Eager Beagle, Holts Summit

FITTING THANKS

I just finished reading Mark Goodwin's wonderful story about fishing with his dad and old friend [February; Page 16]. My dad has been gone for six years now, but this story brought back so many memories of him. From the time I was in grade school, he regularly took me and my siblings fishing. By the time I was in junior high school, I knew how to clean whatever type of fish we caught. That time spent with my dad was priceless.

Rita Summers, Jefferson City



Reader Photo

SPRING SNOW

Ted Eads of Anderson photographed this scene of snow on a redbud tree last March. Ted's wife, Cindy, says her husband took the photo through their living room window. "We are always observing nature and its beauty with our 14-year-old daughter, Marica, and our 5-year-old son, Austin," says Cindy. "Enjoying nature with your kids is the greatest feeling you can have."



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No MOre Trash! Bash in April

Spring into action during April and help clean up Missouri as part of the 2010 No MOre Trash! Bash. This month-long litter-prevention celebration is sponsored by the Missouri departments of Conservation and Transportation and encourages people to help clean up Missouri's streams, roadsides and other outdoor areas by picking up litter.

Last year thousands of volunteers from all across Missouri collected more than 111,000 bags of trash from Missouri's streams, roadways and other outdoor areas to help make the Trash Bash a success and keep Missouri beautiful.

For more information about how you can help, including 2010 No MOre Trash! Bash registration information and details, visit www.nomoretrash.org.

New Member of Top Leadership

The newest member of the Conservation Department's top leadership has practiced conservation in places as distant as Africa but formed the ambition to work in Missouri while still in college.

Missouri Department of Conservation Director Bob Ziehmer recently announced his choice of Ozark Regional Forestry Supervisor Tom Draper as the agency's deputy director—resource management. In this new capacity,

Draper oversees the Fisheries, Forestry, Private Land Services, Protection, Resource Science and Wildlife divisions.

Draper worked with the Liberian Forest Development Authority as a Peace Corps volunteer after graduating from college. After that, he worked for the South Dakota Division of Forestry for 11 years. He returned to Missouri in 1989 and has had assignments including forest products marketing specialist, assistant district forester, district forester and regional forester.

Draper enjoys floating and wade-fishing Ozark streams and hunting upland birds and deer, though he says his enjoyment increasingly comes from "being out there," rather than how much game he brings home.

"I hunt public land, and I find myself wondering how an area where I worked years before is doing. I spend an hour or so sitting in a stand and then I go check on how that land is responding to management activities. I spend a lot of time walking around, checking on things, and if I see a deer, that's fine."

Managed Turkey Hunts

Turkey hunters have until March 11 to apply for managed hunts at August A. Busch, Bois D'Arc, Caney Mountain and Weldon Spring conservation areas and at Current River State Park and Smithville Lake. These hunting opportunities are allocated by random drawing. All 18 hunts are listed in the spring turkey hunting information guide, which is available from permit vendors or online at www.MissouriConservation.org/7498.

In addition to the 12 events open to all hunters, this year's offerings include managed hunts for archers, youths age 11 through 15 and for persons with disabilities. All take place during the youth turkey season April 10 and 11 or the regular turkey season April 19 through May 9. Participants in some managed hunts must complete a pre-hunt orientation. Hunters are urged not to apply for these hunts if they cannot attend the orientation.



TRASH: CLIFF WHITE; ART: MARK RATHIEL; DEER: NOPPADOL PAOTHONG

Nature Center Hours Adjust

Missouri's conservation nature centers are reducing their hours of operation to economize and maintain top-quality services. Reductions vary by facility, but all six will make adjustments in hours or days of operation or both.

The reductions are part of the Conservation Department's commitment to keeping the

agency on a sound financial footing well into the future. Trimming hours of operation and associated expenses, such as personnel costs, will enable CNCs to maintain the high-quality programs and services most important to the public. New hours went into effect Jan. 1 at the Cape Girardeau CNC. Other CNC's new hours will begin March 1. For details, visit www.Missouri

Conservation.org/18150 or call:

- Burr Oak Woods, Blue Springs, 816-228-3766.
- Cape Girardeau, 573-290-5218.
- Anita B. Gorman Discovery Center, Kansas City, 816-759-7300.
- Powder Valley, Kirkwood, 314-301-1500.
- Runge, Jefferson City, 573-526-5544.
- Springfield, 417-888-4237.



ASK THE OMBUDSMAN

Q. I read in a previous *Conservationist* that there are no natural lakes in Missouri. I have heard that Creve Coeur Lake is a "natural oxbow lake." Why would that lake not be considered "natural?"

A. You are correct that Creve Coeur Lake is a natural oxbow lake and there are other natural oxbow lakes in Missouri. Oxbows are lakes that remain in old river channels after the river changes course. We also have natural sinkhole ponds or lakes formed from collapsed cave systems and "blue (or blew) hole" ponds carved by flooding rivers as they flowed through levee breaks. What we don't have in Missouri is the type of natural lakes resulting from past glaciation that are so plentiful in the Great Lakes states and Canada.

Q. Why are bucks with spikes longer than 3 inches protected under the regulations? I have read that spike bucks will usually remain spike bucks throughout their lives. Wouldn't it benefit the deer population to eliminate these bucks?

A. The four-point antler restriction is intended to encourage hunters to shoot does in areas of Missouri where deer are plentiful. The great majority of Missouri's small-antlered bucks are yearlings that will grow larger antlers as they age.

Some deer managers have promoted the culling of yearling spike or small-antlered deer, thinking that the practice would lead to more adult deer with superior antlers. The assumption of this practice is that a buck's first set of antlers

are predictive of antler size at maturity. Research studies performed on deer herds have produced conflicting results. However, they have revealed a number of non-genetic factors that influence the size of a buck's first set of antlers. These include climate, nutrition, stress, social behavior, birth date and early nurturing.

A study performed in Texas from 1999 to 2007 obtained data from free-ranging wild deer. In that study, by researchers at Stephen F. Austin University, antler size of yearling deer had no relationship to the antler size of those same bucks at 4.5 years old or older.



Yearling spike deer

Ombudsman Tim Smith will respond to your questions, suggestions or complaints concerning Department of Conservation programs. Write him at PO Box 180, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0180, call him at 573-522-4115, ext. 3848, or e-mail him at Ombudsman@mdc.mo.gov.

Deer Harvest Totals

A record archery harvest and a strong late-season effort by firearms hunters brought Missouri's 2009-2010 deer harvest to nearly 300,000.

Bowhunters set new records for both deer and turkey harvest, shooting 51,972 deer between Sept. 15 and Jan. 15. That is the first time in the archery season's 64-year history that the harvest has topped 50,000. Archers also checked a record 3,298 wild turkeys. Experts

attribute archers' success to better equipment and a growing bowhunting tradition that has increased archery skills.

Difficult weather plagued hunters during the opening weekend of the November firearms deer hunt, causing the harvest for those two days to fall 12,000 deer short of the previous year's harvest. The November portion closed with a modest harvest of 193,155.

However, strong harvests during every other



Canada Goose Management Working

Restoration of giant Canada geese in Missouri and the Mississippi Flyway is one of the great success stories of the 20th century. Keeping their numbers within limits acceptable to human residents of the region is likely to be one of the success stories of the 21st century. The big birds' numbers climbed steadily throughout the 1970s, '80s and '90s, reaching a peak of about 75,000 birds in Missouri in 2000. Complaints about nuisance geese and concerns about a rapidly growing population prompted the Conservation Department to open an early hunting season, conduct goose roundups and offer property owners solutions, such as oiling or shaking eggs to reduce goose numbers to acceptable levels in some areas. These efforts successfully stabilized the population at levels between 50,000 and 70,000 throughout the 2000s. The Mississippi Flyway population also plateaued during this period as other states dealt with their nuisance goose problems. The Conservation Department may allow hunters to harvest more geese in the future if numbers do not remain in check, but carefully measured management will ensure that watching Vs of majestic giant Canada geese crossing the landscape continues to be part of Missourian's outdoor legacy.



Canada goose

segment of the firearms season produced a surprisingly large end-of-season tally. Hunters checked nearly twice as many deer during the four-day urban portion of the firearms deer season as they did the previous year. Youths checked almost 3,000 more deer in the early youth hunt than in 2008. The antlerless portion topped the previous year by more than 7,000, and muzzleloader hunters set a new record during their portion of the firearms season. Young hunters closed the firearms season by shooting 1,706 deer during the late youth portion, in spite of brutally cold weather. The final firearms deer harvest of 247,409, combined with the archery kill pushed the 2009-2010 harvest to 299,461.

Invasive Species Challenges

Since the first Missouri sightings of Eurasian collared doves 10 or 15 years ago, the exotic birds have spread across the entire state. They are found almost exclusively around grain elevators, bird feeders and other artificial food sources. So far, they don't seem to be competing significantly with native mourning doves. However, their spread from Florida to British Columbia in less than 30 years illustrates the danger posed by invasive species. Once invaders become established in the wild, little can be done to eradicate them. Exotic birds, fish, mammals, reptiles and amphibians should be maintained carefully to prevent escape and never deliberately released. Unlike the Eurasian collared dove, the next exotic invasive could have devastating ecological effects and no remedy.

“I AM CONSERVATION”



NOPPADOL PAOTHONG

Jim DiPardo's donation of sandstone will improve fish habitat at Maramec Spring.

Making a Difference at Maramec Spring *by Chris Canipe*



Jim DiPardo lives just minutes from the park where he once lived and worked.

“I hear the fishing whistle at Maramec Spring go off everyday,” he says. “I can hear that horn blast; it comes right down the river.”

DiPardo serves as the chair of the Land Reclamation Commission, which oversees health and environmental regulations related to mining operations in Missouri. He also operates a sandstone quarry in nearby Rosati—the only quarry in the state that supplies builders with naturally occurring Missouri sandstone.

Last year, DiPardo got wind of a project at Maramec Spring to bolster the natural fish habitat. Using root wads

salvaged from fallen trees—casualties of a recent ice storm—biologists wanted to create cover for fish in the popular fishing stream.

DiPardo said he knew just the thing to anchor the giant root wads to the stream bed. Sandstone.

He donated enough boulders to anchor about a dozen root wads and to build two sandstone pyramids on the stream bed.

The Missouri Department of Conservation manages the park's trout fishery under an agreement with the park's owner, the James Foundation. The Department also operates a trout hatchery on site, making the park a very popular fishing destination.

Paul Spurgeon, Maramec Spring Hatchery manager, said the sandstone fell in line with park's mission.

“The James Foundation is really protective and tries to keep things natural,” Spurgeon says. “When we put in a stone structure or anything they want it to look as natural as possible.”

DiPardo, 61, is no stranger to the park. A graduate of MU, he was hired out of college by the James Foundation as the on-site naturalist at Maramec Spring. He lived at the park from 1978 to 1983 and continued to work as the park's superintendent until 1988.

“It's kind of a magical place,” he says. And when it comes to protecting Missouri's natural resources, “the state can't do it all, the federal government can't do it all. It's part of being a good steward. You want to pass it on to your heirs.” ▲





Hatchery Centennial

Roaring River hatchery has been raising trout for anglers for 100 years. *by* JERRY DEAN

Roaring River State Park, nestled among the hills of southern Barry County near Cassville, draws visitors from across Missouri and neighboring states. Although the 4,093-acre park offers camping and hiking opportunities, its main appeal is trout fishing.

Roaring River Hatchery, which is operated by the Missouri Department of Conservation, pro-

duces more than 250,000 rainbow and brown trout each year. Most of those fish end up in the upper 1.7 miles of Roaring River that is within the park boundaries. The stream originates at Roaring River Spring—one of the park's many scenic features. The 20 million gallons of cool water that flow from the spring daily make trout rearing and trout fishing possible at the park.

Right: The Bruner family left to right are Roland E. Bruner Sr., Roland E. Bruner Jr., Hannah (Lollie) Bruner, and youngest son Carey Bruner.

Below: The fish hatchery Bruner built included a small hatchery building and several raceways, which are shown in this photo.



A Natural Choice

The spring—and the cool water that gushes from it—prompted Roland Edward Bruner to construct the first trout hatchery at the site in 1910. Bruner was born in 1860 in Pennsylvania and later moved to Wellsville, Kansas, where he married Hannah McLain in 1883. Among his many careers, he was a miner and progressed from prospector to president of the Anaconda-Arizona Mining Company. His business took him around the country, including the Ozarks. He also traveled to Colorado, where he became interested in rainbow trout, not so much in how to catch them but in how to raise them.



The fish hatchery Bruner built included a small hatchery building on the northwest corner of the spring pool's dam and several raceways.

Bruner started with trout that were shipped by railroad from Colorado to Monett about 25 miles to the north. He put a tank on his pre-1910 model truck to carry the trout from the railroad landing to Roaring River, a trip which included seven miles of extremely poor roads.

Much of the information on Roaring River's early days comes from Roland and Hannah's granddaughter, Betty Bruner Layton, who lived in the park until she was 5 years old. Before the U.S. entered World War I, her father, Roland Bruner Jr., left college at the University of Missouri in 1916 and joined the American Field Service in France to fight the Germans. He was wounded and returned to the U.S. in 1917. He came to Roaring River to heal and to help his father with his hatchery.

Roaring River was self-sufficient in those days. Betty remembers guests picking out trout in the raceway near the hotel for dinner. The restaurant would prepare the trout and serve it with a watercress salad and vegetables grown nearby. Layton's maternal grandparents ran the restaurant and hotel.

Although the Bruners worked hard and built up a beautiful resort with numerous modern conveniences, the business faced several challenges, including the poor condition of the road from Cassville to Roaring River. Fire destroyed the hotel in October 1923. In November 1927, a very large flood washed out part of the hatchery and about 100,000 trout escaped into the river. These and other hardships caused the Bruners to run out of money.

The property was foreclosed and sold for \$105,000 on the courthouse steps in Cassville on Nov. 16, 1928, a Friday, to St. Louis businessman Thomas M. Sayman. He didn't waste any time turning his dreams for Roaring River into reality. By the following Tuesday, he had a contract to build a new hatchery building, and work started on Wednesday. He wanted to make sure the building would be ready for spawning season.

Although all accounts say that the building was finished, Sayman's plans changed abruptly before the end of the year, and he decided to donate the property to the state for a park.



Left: St. Louis businessman Thomas M. Sayman purchased the property in 1928, but donated Roaring River to the state for a park.

Below: In June 1933, Company 1713 of the Civilian Conservation Corps repaired the dam containing the spring pool.



State Hatchery

In 1928, the State Game and Fish Commission took possession of the property. In short order the hatchery superintendent of Bennett Spring Park brought down a truckload of trout to the state's newly acquired hatchery at Roaring River. The head of the Game and Fish Commission, Keith McCanse said, "Roaring River will be used as a fish hatchery, game refuge and a recreational center."

Company 1713 of the Civilian Conservation Corps (a government work program set up during the Great Depression for young men 17 to 24 years old) moved into Roaring River in June 1933. At first, the camp was made up of 150 men, but 1,500 worked there during seven years of the program. They were paid \$8 per month and their families back home received \$22 per month.

One of the Civilian Conservation Corps' first projects was repairing the dam containing the spring pool. This earthen structure was first built in 1865 to divert water to the mill at the site of the present day Civilian Conservation Corps Lodge. It also impounded water from the spring, creating enough head pressure to allow water to flow through the hatchery. The new structure was built with rock quarried from the park.

In 1937 the Department of Conservation was formed, replacing the Missouri Game and Fish Commission. That same year, the State Park Board came into existence and was charged with administering Missouri's state parks. As

were the other state hatcheries, the trout hatchery at Roaring River was administered by the Department of Conservation. In 1974 during a reorganization of state government, the Department of Natural Resources was formed and took on the responsibility of administering the state parks, but the Department of Conservation continued to run the hatchery.

In May 1938, a flood severely damaged Roaring River's hatchery. A cloudburst caused the water to rise 10–12 feet and sweep down the valley above the spring. The high water washed out the foundation of the hatchery building and raceways and caused the release of around 60,000 trout into the river. Ironically, many people reported that fishing had never been better.

The Department of Conservation, the State Park Board, the National Park Service and the Civilian Conservation Corps worked together to rebuild the hatchery and repair other damage in the park. Because the hatchery had been seriously damaged twice in the previous 11 years, they rebuilt the hatchery on higher ground.

A flood in 1938 washed out the foundation of the hatchery building and raceways and caused the release of around 60,000 trout into the river.





The 4,093-acre park offers camping and hiking opportunities, but trout fishing is its main appeal.

DAVID STONER



In the past 68 years,
more than 11 million
trout have been raised at
Roaring River Hatchery.

DAVID STONNER

Since 1938, no fish or hatchery buildings have been lost due to high water.

Before the Civilian Conservation Corps closed their camp in October 1939 and moved the company to General Pershing State Park, they built the present-day stone hatchery buildings and 22 rock-capped pools. Six additional raceways were constructed in 1940 by the Work Projects Administration. This gave the hatchery 30 outside pools.

In addition to keeping pace with local fishing demands, Roaring River Hatchery began to set the trend in trout-rearing practices. The hatchery originally made its own trout feed of ground wheat and liver that was cooked into a mush, but the hatchery worked with the Purina Company in the late 1950s to develop the world's first nutritionally complete dry feed for trout.

The ninth formula they tested at Roaring River did much better than the liver mix (the magic ingredient was vitamin C). The liver and wheat mixture required 6 pounds of feed to produce 1 pound of trout. By 1963 the commercial dry product they used only required 2 pounds per pound of trout—a huge step forward in the science of trout production.

In 1961 the Department of Conservation built more raceways and added a pump that would bring water from the river when the flow was low. That brought the number of pools the hatchery had to its current number of 40.

There have been many periods of low water over the years. As recently as 2004 and many times in previous years, fish had to be moved out of Roaring River to be held at other hatcheries due to lack of water. A liquid oxygen system installed in 2006 enables the hatchery to raise fish with less water and greatly lessens the need to find other locations for the trout during low water.

Through the years many of the aging Civilian Conservation Corps-built structures developed problems. The bridge to the hatchery cracked, and portions were close to falling into the river. The dam around the spring pool developed serious leaks causing erosion of the material underneath the walkway. The falls structures adjacent to the river eroded and were in danger of failing.

In 2001 and 2006, projects carried out by the



Department of Conservation with funds from MDC, the Department of Natural Resources and the Federal Sport Fish Restoration Program corrected these problems and added a great deal of disabled-user access to the stream adjacent to the hatchery.

In 2009, the Department of Natural Resources funded a project that replaced eroded material under the pavers on top of the spring pool dam and replaced degraded stones on the structure with stone harvested from the park. These improvements will result in the hatchery and the beautiful Civilian Conservation Corps work associated with it lasting many more years.

Records don't reveal how many trout were produced during the hatchery's first 32 years of existence, but in the past 68 years more than 11 million trout have been raised at Roaring River Hatchery. These millions of fish have brought generations of anglers and their families to Roaring River and have created at least as many lasting memories. ▲

VISITING ROARING RIVER HOURS:

Hatchery grounds are open to visitors from dawn until 10 p.m. year-round including holidays.

HATCHERY TOURS:

May through August everyday at 2 p.m.

DIRECTIONS:

Located 7 miles south of Cassville on Highway 112

MORE INFORMATION:

Call 417-847-2430 or go online at www.MissouriConservation.org/11338





Gone Fishing

A weekend spent
searching for trout on one of
Missouri's blue ribbon trout areas

by DAVID STONNER

📷 70–200mm f/2.8 lens
f/7.1 1/250 sec • ISO 200

THE CLICK OF A CLASSIC FLY REEL being stripped, the barely audible plug and ripple as a rainbow sips a dry fly, the zip and splash as line rips through clear water and pulls taut with a fish on the other end. These mental images get my heart racing during the cold winter months. With spring quickly approaching, the annual tradition of anglers hitting Missouri's trout waters is close at hand. I recently had the opportunity to spend a weekend on a real beauty of a trout stream, the North Fork of the White River, with my friend Matthew Taylor and his father, Shawn. The Taylors have lived on the river for decades and know every bend, riffle and hole. While we didn't catch any lunkers, the spirited fight and vivid crimson coloration of the self-sustaining rainbow trout population more than made up for it. The brown trout on this stream are stocked, and the ones that survive through the seasons take on beautiful vibrant copper and yellow hues in their spotting and reach a respectable size through the abundant wild food sources available to them. This blue ribbon trout area in Ozark County tumbles through some fantastic hill country. The light was great. The water was great. The fishing was great; so great that I spent the whole time with my camera in my hands, and my fly rod never made it out of the case! I hope these photos inspire you to hitch up your waders and visit one of the dozens of beautiful trout areas Missouri has to offer. ▲



◀ STARTING THE DAY

📷 100mm f/2.8 lens • f/2.8 • 1/160 sec • ISO 100



◀ FINDING THE RIGHT FLY

📷 70–200mm f/2.8 lens
f/2.8 • 1/200 sec • ISO 800

▼ NORTH FORK OF THE WHITE RIVER

📷 Six-frame digital panorama
16–35mm f/2.8 lens with
polarizing filter
f/11 • 1.3 sec • ISO 100



PROTECTING MISSOURI'S TROUT FISHERIES

Missouri's trout are healthy and free of most diseases. To ensure that they remain that way, and to keep our streams free of aquatic nuisance species, please follow these guidelines:

- Do not release live or dead trout obtained from outside the state into Missouri waters. Consult a Conservation Department fisheries biologist before stocking trout from any source (see Page 3 for regional office phone numbers), and be aware that importation of trout into Missouri is strictly regulated. To see a full listing of trout regulations, consult *A Summary of Missouri Fishing Regulations* available at permit vendors, or go online at www.MissouriConservation.org/2115.
- Thoroughly clean boots, waders, boats, trailers and fishing tackle between uses. Do not transfer mud, aquatic plants, water or fish parts from one body of water to another. Consider replacing felt-soled waders, which may result in the transfer of plants or animals between water bodies, with boots with sticky rubber soles.
- Report any fish kills, dying or diseased fish or water pollution to a Conservation Department fisheries biologist, or call the Department's Environmental Services Unit at 573-882-9880.



▲ CASTING OUT

📷 16–35mm f/2.8 lens • f/22 • 0.3 sec • ISO 50

► CAUGHT

📷 70–200mm f/2.8 lens • f/3.2 • 1/800 sec • ISO 200





▼ RAINBOW TROUT

📷 70-200mm f/2.8 lens
f/2.8 • 1/125 sec • ISO 400



TROUT FISHING ETHICS

A wide variety of trout fishing opportunities are available to Missouri anglers. However, the state's trout waters are limited and can get crowded. To make everyone's experience more enjoyable, consider the following:

Respect Your Fellow Anglers:

- Know and follow posted fishing regulations.
- Don't wade in front of others—allow space for backcasting.
- Give priority to disabled anglers in areas accessible to them.
- Don't throw rocks or disturb the water.
- Minimize noise—avoid loud music or yelling.

Catch-and-Release Guidelines:

- Minimize the amount of time you play a fish.
- Handle the fish gently, keep it in the water and release it quickly.
- Hold an exhausted fish underwater, facing upstream, until it swims away.
- Use the heaviest tackle appropriate.
- Use needle nose pliers to back the hook out. Never pull a swallowed hook; instead, cut the line.
- Use barbless hooks or squeeze the barb flat to make releasing fish easier.

Minimize Your Impact on the Environment:

- Don't litter! Bait containers, cigarette butts and fishing line harm wildlife and degrade the outdoor experience.
- Use only designated trails and parking areas.
- Don't shuffle your feet in the water to stimulate fish to feed.

► BIG BROWN

📷 24–70mm f/2.8 lens • f/9 • 1/80 sec • ISO 200

▼ MAKING MEMORIES

📷 70–200mm f/2.8 lens • f/2.8 • 1/640 sec • ISO 400



TROUT AREAS

Visit www.MissouriConservation.org/7266 for more information and to download maps of Missouri trout areas.

Trout Parks: Missouri has four trout parks, heavily stocked and heavily fished. These parks are located at hatcheries and stocked daily. Their regular season is March 1 through Oct. 31.

Winter Trout Areas: Several small lakes, with a Nov. 1 to Jan. 31 catch-and-release season. Most are stocked once in early November.

White Ribbon Trout Areas: Fishing is permitted year-round. Stocked less intensively than trout parks. Daily limit is four trout with a 15-inch length limit on brown trout. Less crowded than trout parks and winter trout areas.

Red Ribbon Trout Areas: Stocked less intensively than white ribbon areas. Browns are typically stocked once a year. Special regulations may include length limits, reduced creel limits and tackle restrictions.

Blue Ribbon Trout Areas: Small streams are not stocked, but depend on self-sustaining populations of rainbow trout. Only artificial lures are permitted. Natural, soft plastic and scented baits are prohibited. The daily limit is one trout of 18 inches or greater length.

Lake Taneycomo: Stocked with both rainbow and brown trout. Daily limit is four (one brown trout), there is no length limit on rainbow trout below Fall Creek, and the minimum length limit for browns is 20 inches. Above Fall Creek all rainbows between 12 and 20 inches must be released unharmed immediately and only flies and artificial lures may be used.







One bad back plus two
burnt scones equals one
successful turkey hunt.

Gainful Gobbling

by DAVID URICH, *photos by* DAVID STONNER

At 4:15 in the morning of the turkey season opener, I was lying on my stomach on the living room floor with a rubber ball under my chest. I was limbering up so that I could put my boots on. Now that I'm approaching my sixth decade, bending over to lace up my boots is a feat I need to negotiate carefully. Several years ago, I hurt my back and it hasn't been the same since. In the early morning, my back is the stiffest and I must loosen up gradually to ease into my boots. This requires that I get up a little early and follow a foot-into-boot insertion process that was prescribed by my wife, Jen, a physical therapist and my personal back manager.

Unfortunately, she won't get up at 4 a.m. to supervise this involved process and lace up my boots for me. Nor will she fix me a hearty breakfast as a precursor to the turkey hunt.

It is only a matter of time before I will need to buy slip-on boots for early morning hunting departures.

After I finally limbered up enough to tie my boots, I prepared a snack to take with me. The night before, Jen baked scones to take to her coworkers as a special treat. Good for me that she was diverted by other activities while the scones baked and the bottoms burned. This meant that I could have as many as I wanted for my turkey hunt. Two seemed appropriate.

I arrived at the Manito Lake Conservation Area in Moniteau County as the sun was rising. I was a little later than I would have liked, but the boots and back took longer than I'd planned.

I stepped out of the truck and was immediately greeted by a thunderous gobble on the other side of a small barn next to the parking lot. The turkey hunt had begun even though I wasn't ready. I grabbed my gun and camo coat and trotted up to the barn hoping my back was agreeable to this sudden early morning jarring. Then I crawled on my belly along the side of the barn and peeked around the corner to see a lone tom turkey strutting and gobbling 20 yards from me. The bird was well within shotgun range, but I decided I would call him for a closer look and to test my skills.

Besides, I don't like to shoot a turkey unless I can see the whites of its eyes and smell its bad breath.

Calling with a box call while supporting my weight on my elbows was tricky, but I managed. The turkey gobbled furiously, but he stood his ground. Obviously, I was dealing with an arrogant tom turkey that was demanding the hen come to him.

I hate arrogant turkeys.

I'm not a bad caller so I should have been able to bring in a lone, gobbling bird. The turkey turned away from me





and slipped down the hill, gobbling continuously. It was over and I had failed, which happens frequently in turkey hunting. It was now time for Plan B.

I have a favorite spot on this conservation area where four fence rows converge, funneling turkeys into a small opening. I often sit there late in the morning, calling to entice turkeys. I gathered up my stuff at the truck, including my two burned scones, and made the nearly 1-mile walk to my spot. Although I have never had a male turkey show much interest in a decoy, I set mine out. Given this morning's failure, I wondered why I continue to even bring one.

After settling into my spot, I decided that it was time for a breakfast scone. It was reasonably good, despite being somewhat charred. I nibbled around the burned parts as I kept a wary eye on the decoy.

My breakfast was interrupted by clucking and rustling in the grass. There were two hens standing next to my decoy. How could I have not seen them approach?

Admittedly, I wasn't completely attentive, but I wasn't totally out to lunch or, in this case, breakfast.

One of the hens was uncomfortable with the decoy and moved away. The other hen started calling and walking around the decoy, evidently asserting her dominance.

Her calling was terrible! She had obviously not studied any of the turkey calling videos I'd learned from. But, to her credit, she was effective. Three toms responded to her calling and they were getting closer. This hen apparently didn't like my decoy and was announcing this for all to hear.

I love an arrogant turkey.

There was nothing for me to do except watch. The hen eventually moved behind me and continued to call. This was accommodating because it would make it much easier to deal with the first gobbler that showed up.

I love an accommodating turkey.

Progress was slow; the toms were not racing in to the hen's calling. Since the hunt was proceeding nicely with-



My meal was interrupted again by a massive gobble and had to be put on hold. It was time for me to step up and be a hunter.



out any need for my involvement, I figured I had time for the second scone.

Once again, my meal was interrupted by a massive gobble from behind the fence row 30 feet away. It was time for action! Before I could do anything, a big adult gobbler stepped out in front of me in full display. He was totally enthralled with my decoy. Actually, it was the first time I ever saw a gobbler display for a decoy.

Of course, I wasn't ready at all. The gun was across my lap, my camo head net was in my pocket and I was only half done with my second scone. Plus, I had poured a hot cup of coffee to help that scone slide down better. Nevertheless, my breakfast had to be put on hold. It was time for me to step up and be a hunter.

All the hen had left me to do was to slowly raise my gun and pull the trigger. I did exactly that, and during the middle of breakfast I harvested my first turkey of the season.

I gathered up my things and tagged the turkey. It was at this point my little voice popped up in my mind to review

the hunt and point out areas where I could have improved and been more effective.

My little voice and I go way back. Typically, after a hunt we banter back and forth reliving the day's events, comparing them to past hunts. Basically, my little voice expressed disappointment in my hunting this morning and concluded that I was lucky to have even seen a bird, let alone shoot one.

I had forgotten my shotgun sling, but I remembered that I could take my double barrel apart and put it into my hunting coat. This would free up both hands to carry the turkey. There is a physical principle important to turkey hunting that dictates that turkeys gain weight as they are hauled back to the vehicle. This weight gain can be described precisely and mathematically. The formula is the number 25 (which is the universal turkey constant), multiplied by the distance from the vehicle in feet, divided by the age of the hunter, times the average number of visits per week the hunter makes to the gym, cubed.

My turkey weighed nearly a metric ton by the time I carried it almost a mile back to the truck. I was surprised it didn't smash the tailgate when I heaved it up into the truck bed.

As I pulled out of the conservation area parking lot, my little voice suggested that a prudent hunter would complement his wife on her tasty scones without mentioning the scorched bottoms. Maybe I would become eligible for fresh-baked, unburned scones next time. Most of the time my little voice is right.

I hate that. ▲

Baltimore Oriole

These vibrant songbirds are fun to spot and sing sweet, soothing melodies—regardless of what you call them.

IT'S NOT JUST a mascot for a Baltimore baseball team. This distinctive bird (*Icterus galbula*) is talented in its own right as one of Missouri's great avian songsters. Historically considered two separate species, the Baltimore oriole and its western cousin, Bullock's oriole, were considered a single species for a few decades in the late 1900s. As of 1995, officially they have regained their species status and no longer are called Northern oriole.

Considering the males' vibrant flame-orange breast and deep black head and wings, you might think the oriole would be easy to find, but they manage to blend well into the foliage. Females are especially difficult to locate, due to their subdued tan and brown feathers. Their only adornment is a yellowish-orange breast. The nests are usually found intricately woven onto a drooping branch of a deciduous tree. While reducing potential nest depredation, the location also makes spotting one of these songbirds even more challenging. Looking for the swinging bag nests of orioles in winter is a fun activity, and it offers practice in locating nests during summertime.

Perhaps the easiest way to find an oriole is through its distinctive song, which features a series of bright, slightly slurry whistles. In some species, the males will add a raspy sound to distinguish them to potential mates. You can hear an example of the Baltimore oriole's song on the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's All About Birds Web site at www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Baltimore_Oriole/sounds.

While each oriole's song is unique, all orioles have a similar pattern in their song, making it easy to distinguish orioles from other songbirds.

Opportunistic feeders, orioles are omnivores and consume nuts, fruit, spiders, insects and nectar. Orioles prefer woodland edges and open areas with scattered trees, preferably deciduous trees. However, they have been known to nest in urban parks and green spaces, making the most of what is offered. They can be found throughout the Midwest, north to Alberta and Ontario, Canada, and east to the coast of Maine. They extend south to Louisiana. When winter arrives, the birds will migrate south into warmer climates where nectar, flowers and fruits are available to eat in the humid forests. During migration, Baltimore orioles travel south and survive the harsh northern winters in some parts of the southern United States, but many go farther south into Central America and the northernmost reaches of South America.

Baltimore orioles will use whatever they can find to construct their pendant gourd-shaped nests, though they mostly use plant fibers. Many aficionados of orioles place yarn, long strands of dog, horse, or human hair or other fibers on a bush or wooden platform, and the orioles will readily incorporate the fibers into their nests. Normal nest lining material is grass, plant down and hair. A typical clutch consists of three to seven pale-gray to white eggs, streaked and marked by dark lines. They hatch within 11–14 days.

Orioles remain a favorite for birdwatchers across Missouri, as well as throughout the United States. With their colorful plumage and distinctive song, and the challenge of making their acquaintance, it is easy to see why.

photo by Danny Brown



Painted Rock CA

Breathtaking views of the Osage River reward visitors to this central Missouri area.



THIS MONTH FIX up a daypack and head to Painted Rock Conservation Area. Seven miles southwest of Westphalia on Highway 133 in Osage County, this 1,490-acre area is one of the most scenic in the Department's collection of public conservation lands. Aside from breathtaking views and excellent wildlife watching, it also offers camping,

fishing and hunting in season.

The Osage River—the largest Ozark river in Missouri—borders the property on the west. The area supports a mixture of Ozark and big-river fauna, including the federally endangered pink mucket mussel and the state endangered elephant ear mussel. Six ponds in the oak-hickory forest are managed primarily for wildlife. Timber harvesting is managed to improve wildlife habitat, and 15 acres of open land serve as wildlife food plots. Twenty-five acres of limestone glades are maintained using prescribed fire to control small invasive trees, such as Eastern red cedar. As a result, an abundance of spring wildflowers grow in these glades, which also support invertebrates such as the glade tarantula and striped scorpion.

The 1.6-mile Osage Bluff Scenic Trail winds through the forest and along high river bluffs. It passes a Native American burial cairn constructed between 500 and 1,500 years ago, just one bit of evidence that Native Americans used this land as early as 9,000 years ago. Further down the trail, you'll find the first observation deck, which overlooks Bloody Island to the north.

Where the trail drops down to the river bottom, watch and listen for woodland songbirds such as the yellow-bellied sapsucker, hermit thrush and yellow-rumped warbler. Keep your eyes open for trillium, bloodroot and other wildflowers this month, too. The south overlook, high upon a 140-foot cliff, provides a sweeping view of the river valley. Turkey vultures soar along the bluffs in spring and summer, and you may see bald eagles flying over the river in winter.

Along the trail route you will pass an impressive outcropping composed of three different rock types—dolomite, dolomite/purplish chert and sandstone.

Primitive camping is allowed at a number of designated sites on the area. Anglers can pursue a variety of fish in the Clubhouse Lake and the Osage River, including bass, catfish and bluegill. Hunters will find good populations of deer, turkey and squirrel during designated hunting seasons.

—Bonnie Chasteen, photo by David Stonner

Recreational opportunities: Hiking, scenic views, birding, canoeing, fishing, camping and hunting

Unique features: Osage River bluff trail, viewing decks, fishable lake with jetties and access to the Osage River

For More Information

Call 573-884-6861 or visit www.MissouriConservation.org/a8145





Hunting and Fishing Calendar

FISHING

	OPEN	CLOSE
Bullfrogs and Green Frogs	Sunset	Midnight
	6/30/10	10/31/10
Paddlefish	3/15/10	4/30/10
Nongame Fish Snagging	3/15/10	5/15/10
Trout Parks	3/1/10	10/31/10

HUNTING

	OPEN	CLOSE
Coyotes	5/12/09	3/31/10
Crow	11/1/09	3/3/10
Deer		
Firearms		
Urban	10/8/10	TBA
Youth	10/30/10	10/31/10
November	11/13/10	TBA
Antlerless	11/24/10	TBA
Muzzleloader	12/18/10	TBA
Groundhog	5/10/10	12/15/10
Pheasant		
Youth (North Zone only)	10/30/10	10/31/10
North Zone	11/1/10	1/15/11
Southern Zone	12/1/10	12/12/10
Quail	11/1/10	1/15/11
Youth	10/30/10	10/31/10
Ruffed grouse	10/15/10	1/15/11
Turkey		
Youth (resident only)	4/10/10	4/11/10
Spring	4/19/10	5/9/10
Fall Firearms	10/1/10	10/31/10
Waterfowl	please see the <i>Waterfowl Hunting Digest</i> or see www.missouriconservation.org/7573	

TRAPPING

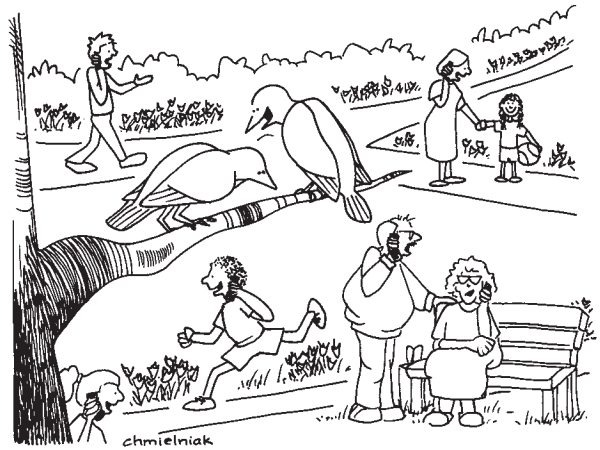
	OPEN	CLOSE
Beaver & Nutria	11/15/09	3/31/10

For complete information about seasons, limits, methods and restrictions, consult the *Wildlife Code* and the current summaries of *Missouri Hunting and Trapping Regulations* and *Missouri Fishing Regulations*, the *Fall Deer and Turkey Hunting Regulations and Information*, the *Waterfowl Hunting Digest* and the *Migratory Bird Hunting Digest*. For more information visit www.MissouriConservation.org/8707 or permit vendors.

The Department of Conservation's computerized point-of-sale system allows you to purchase or replace your permits through local vendors or by phone. The toll-free number is 800-392-4115. Allow 10 days for delivery of telephone purchases. To purchase permits online go to www.wildlifelicense.com/mo/.



Paddlefish season runs from March 15 to April 30.



"I love this time of year when all the humans are up early and calling."

Contributors



JERRY DEAN began his career with MDC in 1986. For the past 19 years he has had the good fortune of having the job of Roaring River Hatchery manager. Jerry most enjoys interacting with the staff at the hatchery and the wonderful folks who come to the park. He feels that he has made some great friends at Roaring River.

Nature photographer DAVID STONNER lives in Jefferson City with his wife, Angela, daughter, Maggie, and son, Sam. Since joining the Department of Conservation in 2007, he has made his favorite photographs while on the beautiful trails of southern Missouri, where he backpacks every chance he can get.



Prior to his recent retirement, DAVID URICH was the Wildlife Division's Ozark unit chief. He was a 30-year employee with the Department. David lives on a 40-acre farm in Moniteau County where he and his wife, Jennifer, raised three sons. Rabbit hunting and fishing are among his many hobbies.

WHAT IS IT?

Prairie Chicken

On the back cover and right is a greater prairie chicken by Noppadol Paothong. Prairie chickens once numbered in the hundreds of thousands in Missouri. Fewer than 500 birds remain. The Conservation Department, in cooperation with its Missouri Grasslands Coalition partners, has a recovery program aimed at improving prairie chicken habitat and eventually removing the species from the State Endangered Species list. For more information, visit www.MissouriConservation.org/17070.



AGENT NOTES

Why start spring turkey season on a Monday?

CONSERVATION AGENTS GET asked numerous questions. One question that seems to come up every spring is, “Why does Missouri’s turkey season start on a Monday?”

Most would like to see the season open on the weekend, but opening spring turkey season on a Monday spreads out hunting pressure and in return allows for a better quality hunt without getting bumped off your favorite spot and/or hunters interfering with one another. With hunting pressure spread out, this helps lower or eliminate the number of hunting incidents that may occur each spring.



Many hunters plan their vacation around the spring turkey season opener. Missouri’s turkey season starts on the third Monday in April. It lasts three weeks and closes every day at 1 p.m. In Missouri, you are limited to one bird the first week. This allows for the weekend hunter to have a fair chance before the weekday hunters take their second bird.

The youth portion of the spring turkey season is open two days and the youth shooting hours are one-half hour before sunrise to sunset. The youth portion normally opens nine days prior to the regular spring season—unless this would allow it to run through Easter—then the youth season opens 16 days before the regular spring season.

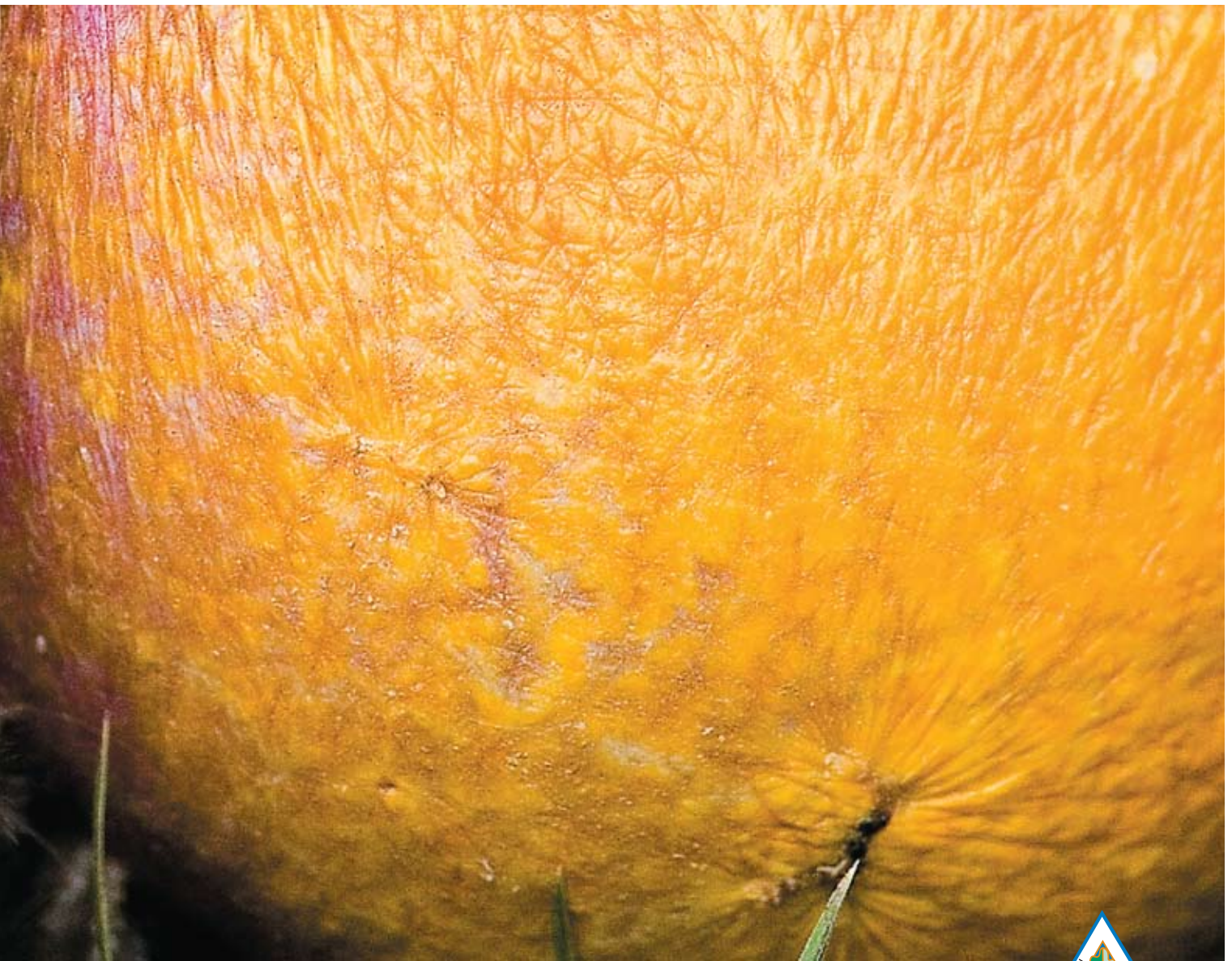
Missouri offers some of the best turkey hunting in the nation. So, beginning the season on a Monday must not be all bad.



Jeff Crites is the conservation agent for Texas County. If you would like to contact the agent for your county, phone your regional Conservation office listed on Page 3.

WHAT IS IT?

Our photographers have been busy exploring the intricacies of the Missouri outdoors. See if you can guess this month's natural wonder. The answer is revealed on the inside of this back cover.



Subscribe online

www.MissouriConservation.org/15287

Free to Missouri households

